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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/750,295	12/31/2003	Peiguang Zhou	19924	9196

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EXAMINER

SPERTY, ARDEN B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1771

DATE MAILED: 08/11/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/750,295

Applicant(s)

ZHOU ET AL.

Examiner

Arden B. Sperty

Art Unit

1771

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-13, 15-21 and 23-35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 26-35 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-13, 15-21 and 23-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **FINAL OFFICE ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. All previously stated rejections under 35 USC 112 are withdrawn per Applicant's amendments to the claims.
2. Claims 9-13 and 15-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are unclear because they depend from claims which have been canceled.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. Claims 1-5, 7-13, 15-21, and 23-24 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 5635290 to Stopper et al.
4. The reference teaches a nonwoven composite comprising at least one layer of a nonwoven fiber web bonded to at least one layer of an elastic material (col. 3, lines 46-55). The nonwoven layer is analogous to the claimed facing layer. The elastic material may comprise strands of elastomeric filaments (col. 8, lines 6-23), and is analogous to the claimed elastic layer. The nonwoven web may be adhesively bonded to the elastic layer (col. 8, lines 59-62; col. 9, line 66- col. 10, line 6). The reference is not concerned with the open time property of the adhesive. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to determine the workable open time range(s) based on the intended use of the product, and the subsequent processing steps. Absent a showing of unexpected results, the properties of claims 1, 7 and 8 do

Art Unit: 1771

not provide patentable distinction over the prior art. The reference further teaches strands of elastic filaments or elastic strips arranged in a planar space-apart fashion, employed as the elastic layer (col. 8, lines 13-16). Upon the elastic layer, meltblown fibers are deposited. The meltblown fibers are analogous to the claimed meltblown nonblocking agent. Thus, claims 1, 7-8, and 24 are rejected.

5. Claim 2 refers to a property of a *rolled* laminate product, rather than the claimed intermediate laminate. Claims 3-5 are also directed to properties of a product which is not claimed. A “roll” is not positively recited; only an elastic laminate is positively recited. As such, the properties of the rolled laminate are not given patentable weight at this time.

6. Regarding claims 9-12, the reference is not concerned with the amount of adhesive employed. An optimal amount of adhesive would have been easily determined by one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233 (CCPA 1955).

7. Regarding claim 13, the reference is silent with respect to the composition of the adhesive. However, the reference recites materials intended for the nonwoven layer, and the elastic layer, and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select a compatible adhesive. The examples specifically recite polyolefin layers. Absent a showing of unexpected results, polypropylene-based adhesives are well-known as compatible with the materials of the nonwoven and elastic layers, and thus would have been within the ordinary level of skill of a worker in the art. This position finds support in *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416, whereby it has been held to be within the ordinary level of skill of a worker in the art to select known materials based on their suitability for the intended use.

Art Unit: 1771

8. Regarding claims 15-18, it would have been obvious, and necessary, for one of ordinary skill in the art to determine the amount of meltblown fibers, dependent upon the ultimate intended use of the product and the properties desired therein. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233 (CCPA 1955). Regarding claim 19, the reference teaches that a compatible polymer is intended (col. 8, lines 13-22). Given the materials recited for the nonwoven and elastic layers, it follows that a compatible material includes polyolefins. This position finds support in *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416, whereby it has been held to be within the ordinary level of skill of a worker in the art to select known materials based on their suitability for the intended use. The reference does not require tackifiers. Unless a tackifier is recited by the reference, it is presumed that one is not inherent.

9. Regarding claims 20-21, the reference intends for the thickness to be optimized by the practitioner (col. 8, lines 23-47). Optimizing such variables requires only routine skill in the art, and thus would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill, as held in *In re Boesch*, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980). As basis weight relates to thickness and density, corresponding basis weights would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

10. Regarding claim 23, the nonwoven materials meet the claimed basis weight (col. 4, lines 1-14).

11. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 5635290 to Stopper, as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of US Publication 20030091807 to Desai et al.

Art Unit: 1771

12. The Stopper reference teaches materials used in a variety of applications, including outer covers of training pants, diapers, incontinence products, environmental and hospital protective garments, and surgical drapes (col. 10, lines 36-45; col. 3, lines 55-65). The reference teaches a gathered nonwoven layer, which is analogous to the claimed facing layer, as stated above. The reference does not specifically recite additional desirable qualities, such as necking.

13. The Desai reference also teaches elastic composites for the same intended uses. Desai also recites conventional uses for stretch-bonded and necked-bonded laminates (para. 0005). Providing both stretch bonding and neck bondings, yields a composite that is stretchable in both the machine and cross machine directions, a feature that is desirable in the intended uses recited by the Stopper reference. It would have been obvious to process the nonwoven material of the Stopper reference to provide necking, motivated by the desire for the versatility and comfort afforded by stretchability in both the machine and cross-machine directions.

### ***Response to Arguments***

14. Applicant's arguments filed May 24, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant first argues that the prior art does not teach a layer analogous to the claimed meltblown nonblocking agent. As described above, the elastic layer of the prior art may comprise elastomeric filaments or strips with meltblown fibers deposited thereon (col. 8, lines 5-23). The meltblown fibers appear to meet the nonblocking requirement because they appear to lack tackiness unless a tackifier is added (col 9, lines 15-17). Therefore, unless a tackifier is added, the meltblown fibers should not cause blocking. The fibers are thus nonblocking.

***Conclusion***

15. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

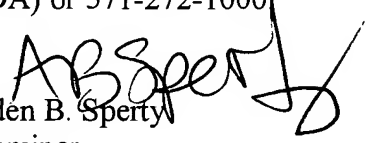
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

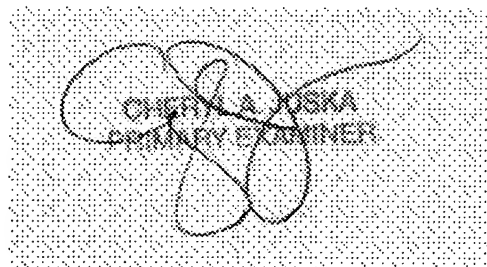
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Arden B. Sperty whose telephone number is (571)272-1543. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 08:00-16:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on (571)272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1771

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

  
Arden B. Sperty  
Examiner  
Art Unit 1771



July 31, 2006